THE CASE OF JULIA B. MATEER

Protestant Missionaries and School Music Education in Late Qing China

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Even before Shen Xingong and Zeng Zhimin published their well-known anthology of 'school songs' in 1904, there were experiments in Western-style school music teaching in China. During the 19th century, foreign missionaries set up mission schools in various parts of the country, and introduced congregational singing and Christian hymns, as well as specific musical skills such as sight reading, voice training, organ and piano playing. This article focuses on the pedagogical efforts of one particular missionary, the American Presbyterian Julia B. Mateer (1837-1898), a warm-hearted and devoted pioneer in this field, who (together with her husband) led a boys' school in coastal Shandong. Missionaries like Julia Mateer helped to lay an important foundation for the future development of music education in China.[1]

The story of Western-style school music teaching in China, as it is usually told by music historians, educators and ethnomusicologists in both China and the West, begins with Shen Xingong 沈心工 (1870-1947) and Zeng Zhimin 曾志忞 (1879-1929), more specifically with their forming of the Society for the Study of Music in Tokyo in November 1902 (Wu, 1996: 123; Ma, 2002: 13-14). Zeng's anthology, *Jiaoyu changge ji* 教育唱歌集 (Anthology of Educational Songs), first issued in Tokyo in April 1904, and Shen's *Xuexiao change ji* 學校唱歌集 (Anthology of School Songs), published a month later in Shanghai and subsequently enjoying a wide circulation, are generally considered the first of the new "school songs" 學堂樂歌(*xuetang yuege*) (Zhang, 1987: 133-39; Wu, 1996: 276-77; Gild, 1998: 119).[2]

This story suffers from one major defect, however: it ignores earlier experiments in school song composing and music teaching. These experiments deserve to be considered in

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[2] For a musicological study of the "*xuetang yuege*", see Qian (2001). For a historical study of the rise of the school song singing in China, see Han (1981: 9-28). For a recent study in English, see Micic (1999).

their own right as well as in terms of their contribution to late Qing school music education. The initiators of these earlier experiments were foreign missionaries working in various parts of China. Prior to China's crushing defeat by Japan in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and the subsequent inclusion of singing in the Qing court's decree for primary schools for girls in 1907, Christian missionaries were the main, if not the only, sources of Chinese knowledge of Western music. Christian hymn singing in particular played a major role in the introduction and gradual dissemination of Western music in China. It was responsible for introducing and popularising a new form of singing in China: congregational singing. This new form added a new dimension to the musical life of the Chinese "besides their operas and folksongs" (Ch'en, 1979: 119). By introducing hymn singing in the schools they established, the missionaries also laid the foundation for the future development of music education in China.

The missionaries were also responsible for the introduction of a new way of learning music. Music as a means of edification, personal cultivation, and political governance has always occupied an important place in Chinese cultural life since ancient times (DeWoskin, 1982; Xiu, 1997). But the usual Chinese teaching routine had always been characterised by rote learning. With the founding of missionary schools in the late 1830s,[3]knowledge and skill of music began to be imparted in classrooms rather than the traditional way of oral transmission. Music in the mission schools and colleges in late nineteenth century China represents an important but little studied phase in the history of music education in China. Music instruction was important in most of the mission schools, which offered instruction in sight reading, voice training, organ and piano playing. These schools remained important until the turn of the twentieth century when the discourses and practice of public education became an integral aspect of early twentieth-century nation-building and modernizing reforms implemented by the Qing dynasty as a means of strengthening China.[4]

To be sure, a number of Chinese scholars have referred to the missionary beginnings of school music education in China (Tao, 1994; Wu, 1996). However, apart from some all too brief mention of music courses at the Morrison Education Society School in Hong Kong and the Ningbo Boys School, there is little concrete study on how and what music was taught at missionary schools.[5] It is worthwhile in this context to carry out some micro-studies of how, when, where, and why the China missionaries played a role in the beginning of China's modern musical education. Focusing on the pedagogical efforts of a nineteenth-century American Presbyterian, Julia B. Mateer (1837-1898) in the last three and a half decades of the nineteenth century, this paper argues for reconsidering a somewhat forgotten part of Chinese musical life. The primary sources investigated here are a musical primer she wrote in Chinese and used as a teaching text at her school, the Dengzhou Boys' School, from the mid 1860s to her death in 1898, and a speech she delivered at the Second Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China in Shanghai in 1896.

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[3] A number of Chinese scholars have identified 1839 as the year in which music was first introduced in mission schools in China. See Wu (1996: 311, 345); Sun (2000: 1); Wang (1999: 19-20).
[4] For a study of education and nation-building in early twentieth century China, see Bailey (1990).
[5] In a recent article, Southcott and Lee (2008) have studied missionaries and the use of Tonic Sol-fa method in nineteenth century China. But their focus is not on school music.

Because of her Christian background and alleged cultural imperialism (e.g. introducing Western notation and promoting a Western way of teaching music), in current scholarship, Julia Mateer has not received the attention that she deserves. In the few biographical accounts available, she is justifiably depicted as a warm-hearted mother figure and a dedicated teacher who had done much to contribute to the early introduction of Western knowledge to China (Mateer, 1912; Zhu, 1913: 11-14; Hyatt, 1976: 139-90). In two recent studies, she is credited for her dedication to music teaching, expertise in Western music, sympathetic attitude toward China's indigenous musical tradition, and pioneering role in the rise of China's school song movement (Sun, 2006; Liu, 2006). Missing from this picture is a critical examination of the complicated nature of Julia B. Mateer's contribution and the motives and historical consequences of her musical activism. Although Julia Mateer's musical activity was underpinned by her understanding of the instrumentality of music and her skilful use of music as a powerful vehicle to advance the cause of Christianity, the richness of her concrete work and broad humanitarianism defies such a simplistic interpretation.

This essay begins with a brief description of Mateer's Christian upbringing, her educational background, and her work at the Dengzhou School, followed by a detailed examination of her teaching manual, *Xiguo yuefa qimeng* 西國樂法啓蒙 (Rudiments of Western Music). In focussing on Mateer's contributions, it aims to personalize the contributions of missionaries, so often lumped together, and thus contributes to the ongoing process of dispelling the politically-inspired but still prevalent belief among Chinese music historians that most missionary schools contributed to "cultural annihilation."

The third part of this essay situates Julia Mateer's work in the context of the nineteenth-century Protestant hymnbook compilation, discussing what were in effect the problems of designing and producing music teaching materials. By focusing on the many dialogues, experiments and negotiations that occurred in the process of intercultural exchange, this part highlights the importance of unravelling the complex relationship between missionary utilitarianism, indigenous tradition and individual agency in a particular historical context. The fourth part analyses Mateer's attitude toward China's musical traditions and her teaching approach with particular reference to her use of Chinese materials in her teaching. The conclusion draws the themes discussed in the essay together in a tentative reflection on some of the broad issues of nationalism and missionary education and acculturation.

Julia B. Mateer: Background and the Dengzhou School

Born on a quiet farm near Delaware, Ohio, on 6 July 1837, Julia Ann Brown, later known in Chinese as Di Jiulie 狄就烈, was the fourth child in a family of six. Her father, a cabinet-maker in western Pennsylvania, was a "stern" and strongly religious man who made sure that all his six children "commit the Westminster Catechism" to memory and "attend church, four miles away, whatever the weather" (Mateer, 1912: 17). Her mother, on the other hand, was a woman of warmth and affection, although no less a devoted Christian. It was likely that the principles of humanity and Christian love Julia Mateer was to exemplify in her mission work in China came from her. In the early 1830s the family had moved to the farm near Delaware, where her father became an influential figure in the neighborhood and for many years a leader in the Presbyterian Church of Delaware.

Julia Brown's early years in the United States were not easy, nor was her early education ideal. She lost her mother at the age of seven and suffered a great deal at the hand of her stepmother. In spite of her later success in running schools for boys and girls in Shandong, her own education left much to be desired. The district school of her earlier years was by no means of the best and the two female seminaries she attended for three years afforded her little opportunities. But from very early on she showed a capacity for overcoming adversity. She also had a talent for teaching and organizing events. While in the seminary at Granville, Ohio, for example, she helped organize a literary society. Later, when she went on to teach at a country school, she assumed entire control of the school. As will be seen, all these traits were to help her in her later educational endeavours in China.



Fig.1. Julia B. Mateer shortly after her arrival in China. Source: Mateer, 1912.

There is no evidence of Julia Brown having been formally trained in music. It was through her involvement with the Church that she developed a lifelong passion for music and gained her musical skills, having come to a recognition of its instrumental potency in evangelism. While taking an active part in the work of the Presbyterian Church she became a member of the choir and received her training in music theory and voice. It was also through her church involvements that she became engaged to Rev, Calvin W. Mateer. Dispatched by the American Presbyterian Missions (North), the Mateers embarked on their journey to China shortly after their marriage in December 1862. On 15 January 1864, they reached their destination, Dengzhou 登州, a newly-opened port city known today as Penglai 蓬莱, in Shandong Province.[6]

In the number of studies currently available that mentioned Julia Mateer, she was invariably referred to as an understudy to her husband Calvin W. Mateer, widely known in China as Di Kaowen 狄考文 (1836-1908). This is not surprising given the latter's reputation as one of the "Three Great Pioneers" of the American Presbyterian Church's mission field and his role as the most staunch proponent of modern education (Hyatt, 1976: 139).[7] But Calvin could not have achieved his fame without the help of his wife. Irwin Hyatt, Calvin Mateer's biographer, even goes as far as to point out that it was in fact Julia's

6 The above biographical information is drawn from Mills (1898:218); Mateer (1912:18-31); Zhu (1913:11-13).

7 Calvin W. Mateer was a towering figure in the history of the Protestant movement in China, best known for his work as the founder of Shandong Christian University. Besides education, Mateer also had a great impact on China missions generally and his "influence permeated at the time the life and work of practically every young Protestant missionary north of Shanghai" (Hyatt, 1971: 303-04). For a critical evaluation of his life and work in Shandong, see Hyatt (1976). For a more recent treatment of Mateer in Chinese, see Shi (1990).

"ideas and hard work and psychological support" that "underlay much of what he later received credit for achieving" (1971: 306). Their joint effort in establishing the Dengzhou School for Boys, the predecessor of Shandong Christian University, is a case in point.

The Mateers founded Dengzhou School for Boys 登州蒙养學堂 (Dengzhou menyang xuetang) in September 1864 as a six-year Christian "moulding" programme. Nominally Calvin was the principal, but in reality it was Julia who came up with the idea and started this little boarding school. Realising from very early on that she would be childless she "chose an obvious 'foster mother' role" while Calvin Mateer spent most of his first ten years preaching and itinerating (Hyatt, 1971: 309). Up to 1873, Julia Mateer alone ran the school and did "fully two-thirds of the work" (Hyatt, 1976: 159). Apart from teaching her students music and geography and handling their religious training, Julia Mateer busied herself with "checking food and drink, the dormitory thermometer, and many other things" (Hyatt, 1976: 170). As her student Zhu Baochen 朱葆琛 recalled fondly in 1912:

> If a student's clothing were dirty, she had it cleaned; if the clothing were torn, she had it mended. If the place were very dirty, she would supervise a cleanup. If there were sickness, she would supply medicines. When the weather was muggy, she would caution [the students] to avoid drafts ad to shun raw fruits. When it was damp, she had them sun the bedclothes. When they were dirty, she told them how they must wash; if their hair were unkempt, she told them how they must comb it. In every coming and going, in every look of distress or joy, there was nothing she did not notice and rectify (Zhu, 1913: 12. Cited and translated in Hyatt, 1976: 170).

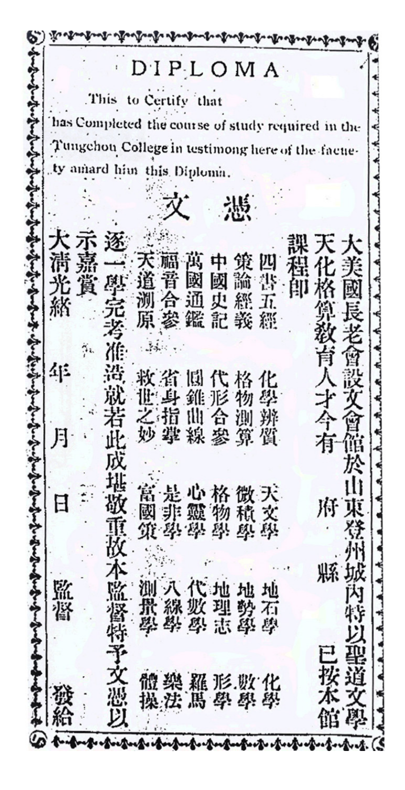
As a vehicle to gain conversion, the school was not a success initially, enrolling only six boys from very poor families in its first year. In spite of Julia Mateer's efforts, this situation did not improve much until 1873 when Calvin Mateer, having failed in his attempts to gain mass conversion through preaching in public and distributing tracts, decided to make education his calling and became more involved in the running of the school. With Calvin Mateer's active involvement, the school underwent a kind of transformation. In 1877 the school was expanded to include primary and secondary departments and adopted the rather pretentious Chinese name Wen huiguan 文會舘 (lit., Literary Guild Hall). Five years later, in 1882, the school was reorganised again as a tertiary institute, Dengzhou College (Hyatt, 1976: 164-90), thus becoming arguably the first Christian university in China (Liu, 1960: 71-72).[8]

Like most of the mission schools at the time, the school was set up to gain a basic hearing for the Gospel and its curriculum consisted mainly of Christian ethics and the Chinese Classics. But the Mateers supplemented "the curriculum with courses in arithmetic, geography, science, public speaking and singing" (Corbett, 1955: 15). In addition to drill in debate, orations, competition in essay writing and declarations were also established as regular features of the school early as the summer of 1867 (Mateer, 1912: 44-45). Because of their training in new learning, the graduates of the college were to play an important

[8] The importance of the Dengzhou Boys' School in the history of Christian education in China has been studied by a number of Chinese and Western scholars. Early studies include Corbett (1955: 1-34); Lutz (1971: 26-28); Hyatt (1976: 159-90). For studies in Chinese see: Shi (1990); Gu (1991: 234-38); and Wang (1997: 216-24).

role in China's modernisation. Of the college's one hundred and forty-five graduates still living in 1912,[9] writes Hyatt:

> 87 were teaching, 26 were in religious vocations, and 32 were engaged in a variety of other work. The teachers were by far the college's most important product: By 1912 Tengchow [Dengzhou] graduates had held a reported 380 teaching jobs in eleven provinces and Manchuria. Three hundred and four of these positions represented mission or other Christian employment, including 103 at rural schools in Shantung [Shandong]. Among the 76 government positions were professorships at Peking Imperial (National) University, plus jobs at a variety of Chinese provincial colleges and primary, middle, higher, normal, agricultural and military schools. A total of 26 positions, or the largest concentration, had been at Ch'ing [Qing] reform-era institutions in Tsinan [Jinan] and Tientsin [Tianjin]. The 32 alumni who went into other work (not teaching or preaching) concentrated in medicine, business, and literary work, including journalism (Hyatt, 1976: 229).


DIPLOMA

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文憑

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中國史記　代形合參　格物學　地理志　形學
萬國通鑑　圓錐曲線　心靈學　代數學　羅馬
福音合參　省身指掌　是非學　八線學　樂法
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Fig 2. Source: Wang and Liu (1913: 37).

The fact that music was highly emphasised from the very beginning is clearly indicated by the reminiscences of the college's graduates (Wang and Liu, 1913: 66-72). As an integral part of the Christian ritual and part and parcel of the Christian educational package, Julia Mateer taught singing and sight-reading as a core part of the curriculum (Mateer, 1912: 71). In 1877 when the school was expanded to include primary and secondary departments, music was once again made compulsory for the primary department (Wang and Liu, 1913: 10b). Even after the school became a two-tiered institute comprising a lower five-year programme for small boys and a higher six-year college course and adopted a new uniform curriculum in 1881, music theory (*yuefa* 樂法) remained a compulsory component for the Preparatory Department (see Fig. 2) and singing an important feature of college life.

In addition to formal music teaching, Julia Mateer also looked for ways to stimulate the musical lives of her students, encouraging her students to use music in all school activities (Mateer, 1912: 71). Students, for example, were required to gather songs for school projects and some even composed their own songs (Hyatt, 1976: 189-90; Sun, 2006; Liu, 2006). Hymn singing at weekly meetings for Bible study also served to enhance the students' interest in music (Wang and Liu, 1913: 66-72).

[9] The total number of graduates of the Dengzhou College (1876-1904), as cited by Hyatt, is 170. There is, however, a discrepancy between the figure provided by Hyatt, who gleaned his figure from the *Alumni History of the Dengzhou College*, and the figure quoted by Robert Mateer, which was 205. See Mateer (1912: 63).

Her own school aside, Julia Mateer also provided music lessons at the Dengzhou Girls' School, which her older sister, Margaret Brown, founded at her request (Mateer, 1912). As a missionary, she was directly involved in providing music for her congregation. She taught her converts to sing popular hymns, compiled hymnbooks and trained a choir. "When the first theological class of older men met at Tengchow [Dengzhou]," recalls her brother-in-law, "she taught music and general lesson in geography" (Mateer, 1912: 135).

Julia Mateer's reputation as an accomplished teacher of music went beyond Shandong, where she worked for thirty-four years till her death in 1898. For example, when the School and Textbook Series Committee was formed in 1877, through a resolution passed at the first General Conference of Protestant missionaries in China, she and Mrs. Williamson had the honour of being commissioned to compile a music textbook entitled *Vocal and Instrumental Music* (Williamson, 1878: 309). In May 1896 when the second Triennial Meeting of the Educational Association of China was held in Shanghai, she, along with Rev., D. Z. Sheffield and others, was nominated as a member of the publication committee with the responsibility of ensuring uniformity in terminology (Hayes, 1896: 28).

***Xiguo yuefa qimeng* (*Shengshi pu*)**

Regarded as one of the first music textbooks for Chinese schoolchildren (Tao, 1994: 163), Julia Mateer's *Xiguo yuefa qimeng* 西國樂法啓蒙 (Rudiments of Western Music), also known as *Yuefa qimeng* 樂法啓蒙 (Rudiments of Music), was essentially a progressively arranged music-teaching manual written in Mandarin (*guanhua* 官話) for mission schools and Christian congregations.[10] Prior to Mateer's book, the Scottish Presbyterian missionary Carstairs Douglas 杜嘉德 (1830-1877), better known for his *Chinese-English Dictionary of the Vernacular or Spoken Language of Amoy* (*Xia Ying da cidian* 廈英大辭典) (1873), issued a number of teaching manuals in Xiamen in lithographed format, including *Yangxin shidiao* 養心詩調 (Hymn Tunes in Three Parts: Treble, Tenor and Base) (1868), *Yueli poxi* 樂理頗晰 (Exercises on Change of Key) (1870), and *Xiguo yuefa* 西國樂法 (Introduction to Common Notation) (1870?). But Douglas's books were different in a number of ways. For example, they were neither specifically designed for school children, nor written in colloquial Chinese. Moreover, the teaching system Douglas used was based primarily on Tonic Sol-fa, a method developed in England by a non-Conformist minister, John Curwen (1816-1880), in the mid-nineteenth century (Gong, 2009).

Xiguo yuefa qimeng was first published by the American Presbyterian Mission Press in Shanghai in 1872 when Calvin Mateer took temporary charge of the press.[11] This was some thirty-one years before Zeng Zhimin's similar writing, "Yueli dayi" 樂理大意 (Fundamentals of Music Theory), appeared in the Tokyo-based radical Chinese student journal *Jiangsu* 江蘇 (Zeng, 1903: 63-70). Zeng's *Yuedian jiaokeshu* 樂典教科書 (Textbook of Musical Grammar) —a music primer based on an English textbook translated into Japanese by Suzuki Komojiro and considered the first of its kind ever written by a Chinese with no

[10] In the late 1980s and early 1990s a small coterie of Chinese musicologists started to notice the importance of this little primer and briefly touched upon it in their research. Liu Qi (1988), Wang Zhenya (1990) and Yongsheng Liang (1994) were among the first scholars to mention this book. Also see Tao (1994: 162-65). For a more recent descriptive study of the book, see Shi and Liu (2006).

[11] A copy of this edition is housed at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University.

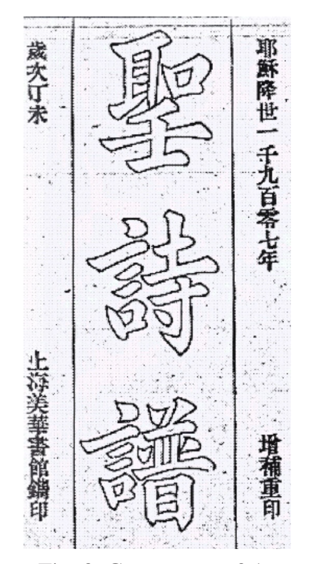

耶穌降世一千九百零七年
增補重印
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上海美華書館鑄印

Fig. 3. Cover page of the *Shengshi pu* (1907 edition).

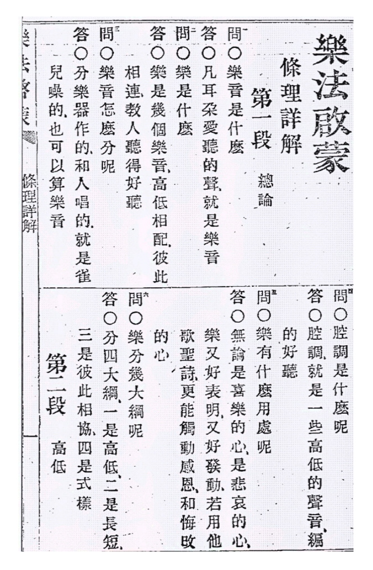

樂法啓蒙
條理詳解
第一段 總論
問○樂音是什麼
答○凡耳朶愛聽的聲,就是樂音
問○樂是什麼
答○樂是幾個樂音,高低相配,彼此相連,教人聽得好聽
問○樂音怎麼分呢
答○分樂器作的,和人唱的,就是雀兒嗓的,也可以算樂音
問○腔調是什麼呢
答○腔調,就是一些高低的聲音,編的好聽
問○樂有什麼用處呢
答○無論是喜樂的心,是悲哀的心,樂又好表明,又好發動,若用他歌聖詩,更能觸動感恩,和悔改的心
問○樂分幾大綱呢
答○分四大綱,一是高低,二是長短,三是彼此相協,四是式樣
第二段 高低

Fig. 4. A page from Xiguo *yuefa qimeng*.

Christian affiliation— did not appear in Tokyo until 1904 (Zhang, 1999: 287). After adding a supplement, *Xiguo yuefa qimeng* was reissued by the same press in 1879.[12] In 1892, six years before her death, Julia Mateer thoroughly revised the book and reissued it under a new but rather confusing Chinese title, *Shengshi pu* 聖詩譜 (Anthology of Sacred Hymns) (Fig. 3).

Similar to most of the nineteenth-century American tune books with European round-note notation, *Xiguo yuefa qimeng* was written in the form of questions and answers. It begins with a lengthy theoretical introduction of fifty-two pages, followed by a variety of singing exercises and literature for practice along with more than 360 well-known church tunes and hymns. Reflecting the changes Lowell Mason (1792-1872) and his followers made in the mid-nineteenth century, Julia Mateer began her introduction with the "gamut," or "scale" ("*yin jizi*" 音级子), and presented the musical fundamentals in the order of "rhythm," "melody," and "dynamics."[13]

Since the book also consisted of a number of graded exercises and notes on how to approach the art of singing, it essentially constituted an organised music curriculum for all grades of the elementary and secondary school at the time. Furthermore, the design as a textbook rather than an ordinary hymnbook is also clearly stated in her author's preface to the 1872 edition, a preface she wrote in Chinese herself:

> In the past when I have worked hard to teach my students and members of our congregation I was often troubled by a lack of suitable music books. So I began to make an effort to sort out some essentials of music and select some relevant repertoire. Initially it was just for

[12] A copy of this edition is housed at Seoul National University Library.

[13] For a thorough study of theoretical introductions in American tune-books, see Perrin (1970).

> my students but later I thought it would be better if I could turn it into a book so that everyone involved in teaching the subject could benefit. Therefore I made further modifications and added more materials. This was how this book came into being (Di Jiulie [Mateer], 1872: 93).

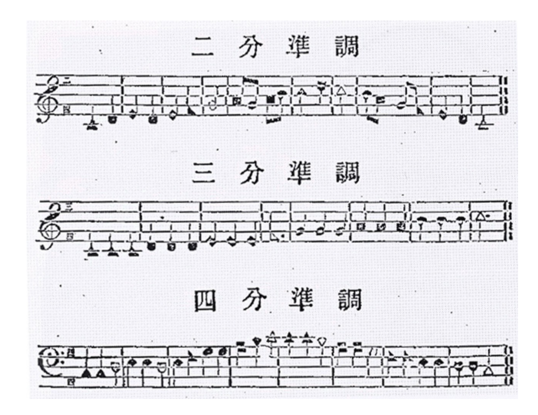


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Being brought up in the singing school tradition, Julia Mateer was clearly a great believer in introductions to songbooks that contained explanations of music fundamentals and ways of voice training. For example, in the introductory section of *Xiguo yefa qimeng*, she explained in simple, colloquial Chinese such musical fundamentals as tones ("*yueyin*" 樂音), tunes ("*qiangdiao*" 腔調), pitch ("*gaodi*" 高低), rhythm ("*changduan*" 长短), intervals and harmonies ("*xiangxie*"相協) and form ("*shiyang*" 式樣) as well as expression marks, chords, modes, the staff, ledger lines and other clefs.[14] The exercise pieces that follow consisted of examples of various time signatures (see Fig. 5) and single and two-part exercises.

In 1892 Julia Mateer inserted "the tenors and altos" in the revised and enlarged book. By making use of melodies with four parts (see Fig. 6) in the 1892 edition (now renamed *Shengshi pu*), she further increased the book's degree of difficulty to a level that was comparable to, if not higher than, the European and American standards at the time.

According to the first complete course of study for music in Kansas Grade Schools in 1894, two-part singing was to be introduced at the sixth-grade level (Heller, 1985: 464). The music curriculum for public schools in Switzerland at the same time, as reflected in such textbooks for children as *Gesangbuch* (1869) and *Gesangbuch* (1867), included two-part songs for grades four through six, and three-part songs for secondary schools (Howe, 2000: 1). What is interesting to note is that the inclusion of four-part singing exercises in *Shengshi pu* was not Julia Mateer's sole initiative but a reflection of the improved singing skill on the part of Chinese members of Christian congregations. In her own words, "The increasing number of Chinese who learn to sing in four parts, seemed to require the insertion of the tenors and altos, whilst the great variety of new hymns and the increased attention to singing, called for a larger and more varied selection of tunes" (Mateer, 1892).

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[14] For a study of Mateer's work from the point view of knowledge transfer, see Zhu (1998); Gild (2004).

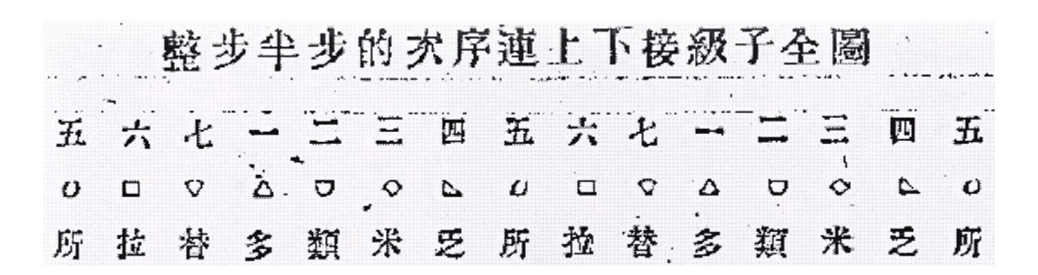


Fig.7. The seven shape notes used in the *Shen shipu* (Mateer, 1892: 7).

Apart from adopting the catechism format in theoretical exposition, the practice of introducing the "movable *do*" rather that the "fixed *do*" concept also constitutes a main feature in the book.[15] The "movable *do*" system, in which the tonic note is always called "*do*", was a practice commonly used in mid nineteenth-century American schools to simplify the learning process (Blum, 1971: 451). But instead of adhering to the four-syllable *fa so la mi* concept, Mateer followed Lowell Mason's example by adopting the more European and musically more advanced Italian seven-syllable concept. The latter practice was relatively new in the United States at the time, as it did not gain wide currency in American popular music education until after the publication of Mason's *Boston Handel and Haydn Society's Collection of Church Music* in 1822 and *Manual of the Boston Academy of Music* in 1834 (Perrin, 1970: 258).

In keeping with the usual practice of most of the American tune books produced between 1801 and 1860, Julia Mateer initially employed an orthodox European notation known as "round notes" in *Xiguo yuefa qimeng*. In the 1892 edition, however, she adopted "the use of seven shapes to represent the syllables used in solfaing" (Mateer, 1892) (see Fig. 7).

Designed to simplify music reading, the first shape-note collection was created by William Little and William Smith in 1801 with the publication in Philadelphia of *The Easy Instructor*. The system initially used only four shapes. Jesse B. Aikin (1808-1890) developed this system in the mid 1840s by adding three more shapes to the existing four to form a diatonic scale, thus gaining the name of "seven-shape system" or "seven-character nation" (Perrin, 1970: 259-60). Although Aikin's seven shapes were by no means the only ones circulating in the United States, they became more or less standard from 1870 (Perrin, 1970: 260-61; Kyme, 1960: 3-8).

Julia Mateer was not the first to adopt the shape-note system in China. According to her own account, "At some of the out-laying stations where one or two of the Christians, who are fond of singing have learned it, they teach the others and lead the singing" (Mateer, 1892). Julia Mateer's switch to the shape-note system, rather than the more widely used Tonic Solfa method, was not only reflective of her American background but also in keeping

[15] The "movable *do*" principle was better suited for community singing and easy to master. *Jianpu*, or number (or cipher) notation, known as Galin-Paris-Chevé method --the most popular form of notation used by non-professional musicians in China now-- is based on this principle.

with her missionary pragmatism.[16] In the nineteenth century, the shape-note system helped a lot of American singers to gain their musical literacy and these singers were in turn "instrumental in stimulating interest in both the old and new tune books" (Sutton, 1982: 13). But Lowell Mason and other pioneers of public school music were opposed to the adoption of shape-note notation as an aid for music reading because they regarded it as a system designed for "country people and inferior indigenous music" (Perrin, 1970: 261). In sharp contrast, what prompted Julia Mateer to adopt this system in 1892 was precisely its easy attainment. In her own words, "[the] Akian [sic] system [was] devised …in the interest of simplicity and for the benefit of persons learning to sing without the aid of an instrument." "With this easy notation before them [Chinese Christians] they sing correctly, avoiding the quicks [sic] and turns so common in the outlying congregations" (Mateer, 1892). As an eyewitness account testifies, this system indeed proved to be "extremely useful for beginners, who had had no previous knowledge of music" (Corbett, 1955: 16).

Like her American contemporaries, Julia Mateer did not embrace the seven-shape method uncritically even as she explored new possibilities. The system may be an ideal way to read simple music but it was not suited to handle more sophisticated musical pieces. In her *Shengshi pu*, she did not make any real effort to alter the staff notation. Whereas Jesse Aikin advocated such drastic measures as the elimination of clef notation and the minor mode; replacement of key signatures; and reduction of meter signatures to 2/2 and 3/2 in a bid "to reduce the elements of music to simplest terms" (Hammond, 1985: 448), Julia Mateer only modified her system to such a small extent that the seven shapes were "the only part of it [the Aikin system] used in the book". "Time, pitch and the various transpositions of the scale, are all indicated in precisely the usual way" (Mateer, 1892). For many years, Julia Mateer had trouble teaching her students "to sing the round notes readily and accurately through all their transpositions." By using the seven shapes, wrote Mateer:

> The singer instead of depending entirely upon the position of the note for its name, recognizes it at a glance by the shape. Every transposition of the scale changes the position of the shapes just as it does that of the syllables, so that no matter where *do* occurs it is written Δ; where Δ is found, it is read *do* so of others (Mateer, 1892).

Here once again, the missionary's pragmatism is revealed. As Gael Graham has pointed out in a different context, "If the Chinese did, in fact, sometimes respond to the missionaries, it is clear that in many instances missionaries were responding to the Chinese" (Graham, 1994: 25). Rather than introducing the more sophisticated Western musical skills to the

[16] This is not to say that American missionaries did not use the Tonic Sol-fa method. The Rev. E. G. Tewksbury (1865-1945) of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Beijing was one of a few American missionaries who advocated the use of the method. In a letter published in *The Musical Herald* (September 1, 1892, p. 271), he wrote: "I wonder if I am the only teacher of Tonic Sol-fa in this poor land. I have only taught but a short time, but am heartily convinced it is the very best system for the Chinese." The Rev. Charles S. Champness of the Wesleyan Mission in Hunan stated in 1909 that he had "always found the tonic Sol-fa method of the greatest use" and recommended Curwen's *The Standard Course of Lessons on the Tonic Sol-fa Method of Teaching to Sing* as the best text-book "for those unacquainted with this method of teaching singing" to study (Champness, 1909: 189).

Chinese, as her fellow American missionaries Laura Askew Haygood (1845-1900) and Laura M. White did at the turn of the twentieth century by way of introducing the Western Classical tradition (Gong, 2006: 163-85), Julia Mateer's immediate concern here was how to respond to the problem that many of her Chinese followers faced in "[l]earning to sing the round notes readily and accurately" (Mateer, 1892).

Xiguo yuefa qimeng in the Context of Nineteenth-century Hymnbooks

The most important factor accounting for Mateer's musical work was naturally her belief in the instrumentality of music in advancing the cause of Christianity in China. The following recollections by her brother-in-law, Robert Mateer—himself a Shandong missionary of many years—in reference to the genesis of the *Xiguo yuefa qimeng*, highlight the utilitarian motivations behind its production:

> She [Julia Mateer] felt the importance of song among the Chinese, who as heathen never sing, but who are fond of music and can be taught to sing well. This book was found necessary and was wrought out in connection with her years of music teaching in the school, and also in the church, where she led the music until she had trained the choir (Mateer, 1912: 71).

The idea that music, hymn singing in particular, had a unique power to sway people's emotions did not originate with Julia Mateer, although she may not have been fully aware of its history in China —it is found as early as the Nestorian hymn introduced during the Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D) (Fang, 1953: 127; Moule, 1930: 52-55). Nor was Mateer the first person to teach Chinese children to sing the praise of the Lord. John of Monte Corvino, believed to be the earliest Roman Catholic missionary to enter China, for example, taught forty choirboys church music in Khan-baliq (Beijing) as early as the early fourteenth century (Moule, 1930: 173).

Attention to hymn singing had always been a major concern among Protestant missionaries in China. Finding that his Christian message was not getting through to his small circle of Chinese associates, Robert Morrison (1782-1834), the first Protestant missionary to reach Canton in 1807, for example, persuaded them to join him in singing hymns with him (Rubinstein, 1996: 82). His hymnal, *Yang Sin Shen She* 養心神詩 [*Yangxin shenshi*] (Sacred Odes to Nourish the Mind), the earliest Protestant hymnbook in Chinese, came out as early as 1818 (Sheng, 1964: 72; Chen, 2003: 39). Following his footsteps, William Milne (1785-1822), Walter H. Medhurst (1796-1857), James Legge (1815-1897), Rudolph Lechler (1824-1908) and other Protestant pioneers, to mention just a few, all tried their hands in rendering hymns into the Chinese language.

Translating hymns and compiling hymnbooks was also a central feature of many of the prominent Protestants missionaries who entered China after the Opium War. In 1851 Divie B. McCartee of the American Presbyterian Mission Board compiled a hymnbook of "23 hymns and a doxology" (MacGillivray, 1912: 253). Samuel N. D. Martin, older brother of the more widely known W. A. P. Martin, was known as "the leader in the writing of hymns in Ningpo" (Champness, 1912: 249) and the hymns he composed were "still sung in the native churches of that region" at the turn of the twentieth century (Martin, 1900: 212-

13). Indeed, convinced of the usefulness of hymns as a tool to propagate God's message, most of the missionaries took an active part in one form or another in the production of hymnbooks. This is indicated not only by the large number of hymnals produced but also by the huge outpouring of "editorials, articles, and letters debating the issues that surrounded the production of hymns in Chinese" from the 1870s onward (Charter and DeBernardi, 1998: 83).[17]

Julia Mateer was not the most vociferous advocate of singing as an instrument of Christian evangelism. In a speech delivered at the first general conference of Protestant missionaries of China in Shanghai in 1877, Chauncey Goodrich (1836-1925) of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) went so far as to declare that the Hymn Book was as important as the Bible (1877: 215). The Rev. William E. Soothill (1861-1935) of the United Methodist Mission, who succeeded James Legge in 1920 as Professor of Chinese at Oxford, showed his agreement with Goodrich when he asserted that "good music takes the shortest cut to the heart, it goes straight there; [whereas] a sermon has to take a by-way through the mind first" (1890: 227).

Yet there are a number of ways in which Julia Mateer distinguished herself from the other missionaries. Differing from other China missionaries, Julia Mateer was one of the first to choose to produce her music primer in Mandarin (*guanhua* 官話) rather than the succinct but difficult to understand (*wenli* 文理) style, or the local Shandong dialect (*fangyan* 方言). Unlike their Catholic predecessors, who on the whole taught their converts to sing liturgical music in Chinese character transcription of Latin (Tao, 1994: 159-61), the Protestant missionaries faced the difficulty of translating hymns into Chinese. When the Protestant missionaries first arrived in China they chose to translate the Christian hymns into *wenli* style, the language of the literati, deeming it to be the only style "worthy to enshrine rich gems of religious inspiration" (Munn, 1911: 708). But because of the multitude of difficulties caused by a combination of Chinese scholar-gentry indifference to Christian doctrine, missionaries' linguistic deficiencies and differences in Sino-Western poetic conventions (Charter and DeBernardi, 1998), these early missionary endeavours achieved little success (Tao, 1994: 156-57). Quick to remedy the situation, some leading missionary translators such as William Young, William C. Burns, W. A. P. Martin, A. B. Cabaniss, and Divie B. McCartee turned to dialectical hymns by translating hymnbooks into the Amoy [Xiamen], Fuzhou, Ningbo and other Chinese dialects (Wylie, 1867: 176; MacGillivrary, 1912: 252-55; Sheng, 1964: 78-79). Symptomatic of this state of affairs is the fact that by the early 1910s, the Rev. D. MacGillivray had found evidence of forty-three different hymnbooks in the various dialects of China (Munn, 1911: 708). Even in far-flung Yunnan, hymnbooks printed in the Miao phonetic symbols were widely circulated among the Miao and Lisu tribes (Yang, 1990: 82-88).

[17] Based on information gleaned from Alexander Wylie's 1867 book *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, the bibliophile Tseun-hsuin Tsien (1954:311) cites 18 hymnbooks in "literary style" and 21 in "various dialects" from 1810 to 1867. In his PhD thesis, the most thorough study of Christian hymns in China to date, David Sheng (1964: 487-519) has furnished us with a list of 208 hymnbooks printed in Chinese from the year 1818 to the publication of the union hymnal *Hymns of Universal Praise* (*Putian songzan*) in 1936. More recently, Tao Yabing (1974: 157) claims that he has personally seen more than 100 hymnals published before 1919.

But before the Treaty of Tianjin forced the Qing court to accept the unrestricted preaching of Christianity and the opening of ten new treaty ports both on the coast and inland in the early 1860s there was understandably little effort to translate hymns into Mandarin Chinese, the most widely understood vernacular form.[18] Julia Mateer's *Xiguo yuefa qimeng* was one of the earliest attempts in rendering Christian hymns in Mandarin. Her life-long friend and fellow Shandong missionary, Mrs. Annetta T. Mills, even went as far as to assert that it was Julia Mateer who "prepared and had printed the first hymn and tune book in Mandarin" (1898: 221). To be sure, in choosing Mandarin as the medium to write her music primer, Julia Mateer may have been influenced by her fellow Shandong Presbyterian missionary, the Rev. John L. Nevius (1829-1893), who had reportedly published the earliest known Mandarin hymnal in 1864 (Candlin, 1893: 168; MacGillivray, 1912: 255). But according to her brother-in-law, Julia Mateer actually "prepared her hymn-and-tune book as a teaching text as soon as the school was founded," that is, September 1864 (Mateer, 1912: 71). At any rate, the formal publication of her book in 1872 was certainly some five years earlier than the widely circulated Mandarin hymnbook, the *Songzhu shige* 頌主詩歌, better known as *Blodget and Goodrich Hymnal,* by Chauncey Goodrich and Henry Blodget in Beijing in 1877.

Xiguo yuefa qimeng, later the *Shengshi pu,* was also one of very few nineteenth-century Chinese hymnbooks that included both texts and music (see Fig. 8).

Before her book, as far as can be ascertained, only two Protestant hymnals, *Sing Saen Yiae Ko* 聖山諧歌 [Shengshan xiege] (Hymns of the holy mountain) and *Qupu zanmeish* 曲譜贊美詩 (Hymn and Tune Book), had tunes printed together with texts. The former, an 80-page hymnbook published in Ningbo in 1858 by an American Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Elias B. Inslee, was "printed in the European form," and had "five pages of instructions." But it was "all in the Ningpo dialect and Roman character" (Wylie, 1867: 244. MacGillivray, 1912: 256). The latter, a hymnbook of 72 leaves (=144 pages), was collaboratively produced by Mrs. and the Rev. John Farnham in the Shanghai dialect in 1868 (Sheng, 1964: 527).

Compared to the two hymnals mentioned above, Julia Mateer's book was not only much larger in size, totalling over 200 pages, but also much more methodical in content. Although comprising a large number of church tunes and hymns, the book was not a hymnal in the conventional sense of the word but, as discussed above, was written in the tradition of nineteenth-century American tune books. The English title, *Principles of Vocal Music and Tune Book,* on the other hand, is a more accurate reflection of the contents of the book in that it not only reveals the theoretical orientation of the book but also betrays its American connection.

Julia Mateer's Musical Teaching Approach and Her Use of Chinese Traditions

Like all good teaching practice, Julia Mateer's musical teaching approach was characterised by a predominant desire to be easily comprehensible. Like the widely used *Mandarin Catechism* (耶穌[官话]問答*Yesu wenda*) written by her fellow Shandong missionary Helen Nevius (1829-1893), Julia Mateer's music teaching manual, for example, was

[18] For a brief discussion of Chinese dialect groups and their geographical distribution, see Bolton (2003: 74-75).

not known for its theoretical complexity. The questions are simple and down-to-earth ("What is a musical tone?") and the answers are easily comprehensible ("musical tones are the sounds that please the ear"). Written in colloquial, everyday Chinese, the literary character of *Xiguo yuefa qimeng* was determined by its comprehensibility to the mass of her native Christians rather than its gratification to the artistic taste of Chinese scholar. Her ultimate aim was to facilitate the teaching of hymn singing on a larger and wider scale. In her own words:

> The purpose of writing this book [*Xiguo yuefa qimeng*] is to help teachers in various parts of China to teach their students and their members of congregations in singing hymns. Besides, it is hoped that Chinese Christians who are talented in singing will have a good method whereby they not only can teach themselves but also instruct other Christians so that everyone can sing hymns in praise of God (Di Jiulie, 1872: 96).

Fig. 8. A Page from the *Shengshi pu*.

This utilitarian underpinning in her approach to music teaching, however, should not prevent us from recognising the pedagogical value of Julia Mateer's experiment. In emphasising the importance of music in education, she clearly shared with her American secular music educators a belief in both the intrinsic and extrinsic values of music. From very early on she argued the values of music instruction and believed that musical education, besides aiding the cause of Christianity, could benefit students physically, intellectually, socially and morally (Di Jielie, 1872). Apart from making the gospel audible and helping cultivate a Christian morality, her promotion of music in the Dengzhou School was also aimed at enlarging "the joy of childhood" (cited in Hyatt, 1976: 189). In a speech delivered at the second triennial meeting of the Educational Association of China, the successor of the Christian School and Textbook Series Committee, in Shanghai in 1896, she made her view clear by saying that "the plays and games of happy childhood, the beauties of nature, animate and inanimate, friendship, domestic love, the pleasures and employments of school days or the festivals which form so large a part of the enjoyments of the people are all legitimate subjects of songs" (Mateer, 1896: 106).

Like her American secular educators, Julia Mateer was also a firm believer in the importance of music in the development of children's imagination and creativity:

> We have in English numbers of songs for recreation and amusement, mirth-provoking, hilarious enough for the jolliest youth, yet without a trace of vulgarity or irreverence. Why

> not encourage and even urge Chinese youth to write and sing such songs, and thus waken in them a larger spirit of innocent fun and frolic? (Mateer, 1896: 106)

It was largely due to her belief in these values of music that an atmosphere conducive to the development of arts within the Dengzhou School existed.

Lian Xi, in his excellent study of liberalism in American Protestant missions in China in the first three decades of the twentieth century, points out the importance of "missionaries' idealism and humanitarianism and China's ancient culture and her modern nationalist awakening" in bringing about "a transformation of thought and attitudes among American missionaries as they developed new understandings of both Chinese religions and culture and of Christianity itself" (Xi, 1997: xii). Julia Mateer was certainly susceptible to the influence of China's cultural traditions. Unlike the majority of foreign missionaries at the time who viewed Chinese music as "barbarous music of the most agonizing quality", Mateer viewed China's folk songs and urban melodies and notational systems with sympathy.[19] Her attitude toward Chinese music, like that of William Soothill and Timothy Richard, was informed by a cultural view that was essentially relativist in nature. This is evidenced by the following remarks:

> All nations in all ages from the time of Jubal and Lamech have had songs and instruments of music adapted to their various tastes and circumstances. The fact that what is music to one people is hideous noise to another only shows the diversity of tastes--- not that any one people are destitute of the musical faculty (Mateer, 1896: 105).

Julia Mateer was convinced that the Chinese needed "their own tunes" even though these tunes might "violate some of the rules of harmony." After all, "so great a people is entitled to its own style of music, if only it has in it the spirit of life and growth" (Mateer, 1896: 107). This liberal attitude is all the more remarkable given that this was a time when the West was still in "the Age of Contempt" (1840-1905) for China (Isaacs, 1971: 71). In 1896, when she made the above remarks in front of a large gathering, the generally disdainful attitude of Protestant evangelists toward all aspects of Chinese culture was certainly still prevalent.

Julia Mateer was well aware of China's indigenous musical traditions and made efforts to render western musical terms and concepts into Chinese. One such example is her short piece, "List of Musical Terms in Chinese", published in Justus Doolittle's *A Vocabulary and Handbook of Chinese Language* (Doolittle, 1873: 307-308). In her teaching, she was in the view that "Chinese method was best for Chinese children" (cited in Hyatt, 1971: 312). Like some China missionaries,[20] she also made an effort to study the indigenous *gongche* 工尺 notation. Developed since the Song dynasty (960-1279), the *gongche* system was arguably the most popular and certainly the most widely used notational system for vocal, wind and percussion music in China before the introduction of the numeral notation (*jianpu*简譜) in

[19] Catharina Van Rensselaer Bonney, *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings*, 2 vols. (1875), cited in Lian Xi (1997: 8). For a good overview of early missionary view of Chinese music, Moon (2005: 10-17).
[20] Missionaries who made a conscientious study of the *gongche* notation included Edward Syle, Timothy and Mary Richard, and William E. Soothill. See Gong (2008a).

the early 1900s.[21] But unlike the British Baptist missionary Timothy Richard (18451919),[22] who became "quixotically appreciative of Chinese civilization" (Latourette, 1967: 440-41), and his first wife Mary (1843-1903), who took the even bolder action by replacing the Tonic Sol-fa method with the *gongche* notation in their music primer, the *Xiao shipu* 小詩譜(Tune-book in Chinese Notation), Julia Mateer, as the following example (Fig. 9) shows, chose to teach her students Western music theory by adopting the European five-line notation with the *gongche* syllables written underneath.[23]

Her reason for not adopting the *gongche* notation, as she explained, was not because Chinese music was inherently inferior but rather due to its unsuitability as a teaching system. Designed primarily as a memory aid, not as a pedagogical means, the main function of the *gongche* notation was to preserve or document (Liang, 1985: 177-78, 186). Moreover, the Chinese *gongche* system was not as complete and accurate as its Western counterpart, especially with regard to notating time-value and rhythm, a view shared by other missionaries.[24]

Differing from most of her fellow missionaries, Julia Mateer was impressed by the beauty and elegance of some of the Chinese folk melodies and urban tunes and experimented with China's indigenous musical traditions. In addressing the specific issue of "what schools and songs for recreation and amusement should we teach and encourage in our schools," she wrote:

> Make them. The Chinese have a great many *K'ü-tsi* [*quzi*] 曲子on a variety of subjects. A few of these are very beautiful in sentiment and faultless in style as judged by the rules of Chinese composition. Translations of such have appeared from time to time in the public prints. The tunes are said to be intricate and difficult, and very few persons are able to sing them. The style of the songs is so high that only well educated men understand them. Then there are many *Shiao K'ü-tsi* [*xiao quzi*] 小曲子, or colloquial songs. A few of these also are suitable for schools (Mateer, 1896: 107).

Dismissing "the word" of "the great body both of *K'ü-tsi* [*quzi*] and *Shiao K'ü-tsi*" [*xiao quzi*] as something that "would have been better had they never been written", she urged the collection "of the few that are worth preserving and publish them in Western notation"

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21 For a brief explanation of the *gongche* notation, see Liang (1985: 177-78). For a recent study of the cultural significance of the *gongche pu*, see Wu (2004).

22 As a measure of his importance in the history of the Protestant movement in China and of modern China, Timothy Richard (Li Timotai李提摩太) has long been the subject of intense scholarly study. Paul A. Cohen's "Missionary Approaches: Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard" in *Papers on China*, No. 11 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 29-62, was perhaps the earliest article on Richard. In 1972, Paul Bohr published *Famine in China and the Missionary: Timothy Richard as Relief Administrator and Advocate of National Reform, 1876-1884* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972). For more a recent treatment of Richard, see Wong Man Kong, "Timothy Richard and the Chinese Reform Movement", *Fides et Historia*, vol. 31, no. 2 (1999), pp. 47-59. There is also a large body of writings on Richard in Chinese. Among the most influential are: Jiang (1964); Gu (1991: 158-59, 163-8, 175-86, 289-93 and 338-39).

23 For a study of the *Xiao shipu*, see Liu Qi (1988); Gong (2006: 126-47).

24 Mateer was by no means alone in this regard, see Syle (1859: 176-79), Soothill (1890: 223-24).

(Mateer, 1896: 107). In her *Xiguo yuefa qimeng*, she used such well-known Chinese folk songs as *Fangyang qü* 鳳陽曲 (Melody of Fengyang), *Duanyang qu* 端陽曲 (Melody of the Dragon Boat Festival) and the popular Chinese instrumental piece *Liuba ban* 六八板 (the six-eight beat, see Fig. 9) as sight-singing exercises. [25] She also encouraged her students to collect Chinese folk songs, set words to both Chinese and Western tunes and compose their own songs. As a result of her encouragement:

> The students in the Tengchow [Dengzhou] College and Girls' High School have translated a good many songs and written a good many new ones to Western tunes, and have made three or four songs, of which both words and tunes are original.[26] These tunes violate some of the rules of harmony, but suit Chinese taste, and sound well as sung by their voices. It is a high merit that they are original and spontaneous. Perhaps these are samples of what the Chinese will eventually sing, viz., Western music modified to suit Chinese taste and voices. If so who shall say them nay? (Mateer, 1896: 107)

Julia Mateer was not the only one who was willing to compromise the integrity of original Western tunes for the sake of accommodating the needs of their Chinese converts. Nor was she alone in advocating the use of Chinese tunes in her teaching. The Rev. William Soothill, arguably the most vociferous promoter of the use of Chinese music in church services, suggested tunes that do not accord with pentatonic scale ought "to be discarded, or used only when absolutely necessary" (Soothill, 1890: 226). Not only did he advocate a wholesale adoption of "native airs" in church services, he even went as far as to state:

> If trumpets, harps and cymbals were used with such effect in the Jewish temple service; if in our churches in England and America fifty years ago violins, flutes clarionets [sic] and basses lent such an effect to the singing that many people now-a-days think the old style better than the new; and if in our own day we think so much of our choirs and spend so much on our organs, then why should we not in our Chinese services *use the instruments* THEY TAKE DLIGHT IN to make our unattractive services more enjoyable? [Original emphasis] (Soothill, 1890: 227).

Timothy and Mary Richard certainly made extensive use of Chinese musical materials. In the *Xiao shipu*, the teaching manual they compiled in Shanxi and first published in 1883, twelve "Chinese airs" were included in the "*ke*" 課 or "exercises" section. In addition to appropriating Chinese secular music, the Richards also broke the sectarian barrier by making use of Chinese religious tunes. The "*diao*" 調 or "tunes" section of the manual, for example, contains two Buddhist chants and three Buddhist airs. In the 1901 edition of the *Xiao shipu,* twenty more "Chinese airs" were added including ten "tunes sung at worship of Confucius, five Confucian chants," one single chant, a Chinese folk song entitled S*hi duo hua* 十朵花 (ten flowers), a Confucian air and two unnamed Chinese airs" (Richard, 1901).

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[25] The 68-beat model, also called the *lao baban* (the old eight-beat), to use Thrasher's words, is "the most pervasive structure in China" Thrasher (1988: 1). It serves as a formal model for a large percentage of vocal as well as instrumental repertoires. For a recent musicological analysis of the model, see Wells (1991: 119-83).

[26] For a musical analysis of the songs by students of the Dengzhou School, see Liu (2006: 44-49).

Julia Mateer was aware of the existence of other missionary writings on music, including those of the Jesuits who were active at the Imperial court in the late Ming (1368-1644) and early Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. Her reference to the *Lülü zhengyi* 律吕正義 (The Correct Meanings of the Pitches), a musical encyclopaedia first compiled under the auspices of the Kangxi emperor (reign 1661-1722) in 1713, is indicative of the depth of her understanding of the subject matter.[27] Yet she was well aware of the inherent defects of the previous missionary work. In particular, she was unsatisfied with the outdated nature of the *Lülü zhengyi* and critical of the inaccessibility of the Jesuits' writings on music in general (Di Jiulie, 1872: 93). It is worth noting that more than a century after she made her criticism of the Jesuits' work from the standpoint of a practicing music teacher, her point of view has been concurred with by contemporary Chinese music historians, theorists and musicologists when they point out the obsolete nature of the musical theory introduced in the *Lülü zhengyi* (Wang, 1990: 62).

Julia Mateer's pedagogical eclecticism is also reflected in her understanding of the distinctions between sacred and secular music. This understanding led her to approach music teaching and learning secular music in schools with caution. In spite of her willingness to use Chinese tunes as teaching material, she was at pains to point out the inappropriateness of using these tunes in Christian ritual. In her initial view, an opinion she was to change in later years, popular Chinese tunes, being mostly for entertainment, lacked solemnity and therefore were not suitable for Christian worship (Di Jiulie, 1872). Although Mateer was rather non-committal about "Whether the Chinese Christians should sing Western tunes or adapt their tunes to sacred song," she had no objection to indigenising church music. She was in favour of either adapting Chinese tunes to hymns or writing new songs, as evidenced by her remark that "a few Chinese tunes have been adapted to hymns, and some tunes that have been written with specific reference to Chinese taste, are very popular" (Mateer, 1892). The fact that both types of hymns were included in the *Shengshi pu* is a further indication of her positive attitude toward indigenisation.

Julia Mateer's use of indigenous musical materials was reflective of the firm belief she and her husband shared in the indigenisation of the Church. As early as the mid-1870s, Calvin Mateer "became an advocate of advancing Christianity in a context of getting along with established Chinese order rather than struggle against it" (Hyatt, 1971: 309). To a certain extent, Julia Mateer's appropriation of Chinese folk songs and instrumental repertoire in her teaching can be interpreted as an endorsement of her husband's insistence that "education should serve the aim of providing a native ministry, that all instruction should be given in Chinese and that this should be done through the medium of the Chinese dialects" (Mateer, 1877, cited in Bolton, 2003: 192-93).

Julia Mateer's use of the vernacular rather than the literary classical style for the purpose of easy comprehension is another example of her missionary pragmatism. Clearly she shared her husband's belief in the importance of colloquial language in spreading the Gospel. As early as 1877, Calvin Mateer declared emphatically:

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[27] *Lülü zhengyi*, also translated as the *Rectification of the Twelve Pitches*, has been the subject of a PhD thesis. See Gerlinde Gild-Bohne, "Das *Lü-Lü-Zheng-Yi* Xubian: ein Jesuitententractat über die europäische Notation in China 1713". Orbis musicarum. 8 (Göttingen University, 1990). For a brief description in English, see Lo (1993: 1896-1901).



Fig. 9

> I believe in colloquial literature, as the kind of literature of the Christian work in China. Who believe the gospel we preach? Who fill all churches? The unlearned and the poor. Let us adapt our Bibles, our books, and religious literature generally, to the class of people He gives us. If colloquial language is good enough to preach the Gospel, it is good enough to write it also (cited in Bolton, 2003: 193).

This bears more than a slight resemblance to Julia Mateer's use of native songs in her music teaching and explains why she took such trouble to incorporate indigenous materials into her music teaching.

Although "the chief object in teaching the pupils in our mission schools to sing is," as Julia Mateer stated, "that they may be able to join acceptably and with profit in this service" (Mateer, 1896: 105), Christian indoctrination was not the only reason for her inclusion of music in the curriculum of Dengzhou Boys' School. As she put it:

> Songs have other uses. Youth is naturally buoyant and joyful. Song is the natural expression and accompaniment of joy. If God is pleased with the singing of birds, the humming of bees, the lowing of cattle as their expression of the joy of living, how much more with the joyous songs of happy childhood (Mateer, 1896: 105).

In her practical guide for the nineteenth-century housewife, Catharine Beecher wrote: "To American women, more than any others on earth, is committed the exalted privilege of extending over the world those blessed influences, which are to renovate degraded man, and 'to clothe all climes with beauty'" (cited in Hunter, 1984: xiii). In making music an integral part of the life of the Dengzhou School, Julia Mateer was clearly attempting "to clothe all climes with beauty." Like other American women missionaries discussed by Jane Hunter, Julia Mateer relied on "blessed influence" instead of direct authority. Music was certainly used as an important means by Mateer to exert such an influence.

Julia Mateer's strong utilitarian view of music is not surprising given her American Presbyterian background and the mid-nineteenth-century American emphasis on the social

values of music.[28] Apart from being a form of "amusement and entertainment", songs, Julia Mateer argued, "affect the character as well":

> Song is also an effective means of instruction and even of reformation. Many a lesson in morals and propriety may be sung into minds it could never be preached into; and many a fault may be sung out of the conduct which neither rules nor chastisement would drive out (Mateer, 1896: 106).

She even went as far as to assert the vital importance of patriotic songs in arousing a martial spirit among the Chinese:

> Patriotism is inspired and nourished in Western lands by our national songs and anthems. Had the Chinese possessed even one widely popular national song with any associations of heroic or patriotic story is it possible that of all the battles in the late war they would not have gained a single one? No martial or heroic spirit can ever be aroused by the little ditty with which the cornet calls the foreign-drilled troops to their daily exercises, or the noisy drums and the solitary monotonous air that accompany the soldier to battle, the youth to his wedding and the old man to his grave. Can a people ever become really great without patriotic and heroic songs? (Mateer, 1896: 106).

Chinese reformers of late Qing education would cite exactly the same rationale for justifying their promotion of music in modern Chinese schools (Gong, 2006: 249-87).

Julia B. Mateer and the Complexity of Missionary-Initiated Music Teaching

The discussion above has described the pioneering role of Christian missionaries in the beginning of modern school music teaching in China. The case of Julia Mateer, however incomplete and unrepresentative it may be as an indicator of the larger movement, serves as a window to understanding how China missionaries contributed to the emergence of music pedagogy in late nineteenth-century China. Missionaries introduced knowledge of Western music and Western-style music teaching in order to gain a basic hearing for the Gospel. But in training their converts to sing the praise of the Lord and using music as a "handmaid to the Gospel", the missionaries did much of the ground-breaking work to facilitate the wider spread of Western-style pedagogy, thus paving the way for Sino-Western musical exchange, and mutual understanding.

Although due to a lack of verifiable sources, it is difficult to gain a real sense of the impact of Mateer's contribution to China's musical education, Julia Mateer's own remark, made in the English preface to the *Shengshi pu* in July 1892, may serve as an indication of the influence of her musical work. In the preface she stated that after the initial issues of the *Xiguo yuefa qimeng*, in 1872 and 1879, "Many inquiries for the book, *especially on the part of the Chinese*" (emphasis added) indicate the need of a new edition" (Mateer, 1892). Judging by the editions housed in various libraries in China (Zhongguo, 1981: 11) and cited by Chinese scholars, at least two reprints, 1907 and 1913, were issued after her death in 1898 (Tao, 1994: 164-65; Feng, 1998: 258). Even though the number of each reprint is

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[28] On mid-nineteenth-century American beliefs in the social values of music, see Stone (1957).

not known, the sheer number of known editions (1872, 1879, and 1892) and reissues (1907 and 1913), provides a glimpse of the book's continued popularity, hence its influence.

Another way of estimating Mateer's influence, perhaps, is to look at the work of her students. Embodying Calvin Mateer's belief that the church had "more call for teachers than for preachers at present" (cited in Hyatt, 1976: 174), of the Dengzhou College's two hundred and five graduates (1876-1904), 106 became teachers and 33 were in religious vocations. They were "scattered among thirteen denominations, and one hundred schools, in sixteen different provinces" (Mateer, 1912: 63). When W. A. P. Martin, "the pioneer of modern state education" (Covell, 1993), was asked by the Qing government to take part in the Imperial University of Beijing in 1897, he turned to the Mateers for help, taking, in Robert Mateer's words, "twelve of our young men as professors; in fact, all the young professors of Western learning are from our college, save one" (Mateer, 1912: 62). By 1912 graduates of the Dengzhou College, as already cited, "had held a reported 380 teaching jobs in eleven provinces and Manchuria" (Hyatt, 1976: 229). Although there is no indication of how many became musicians it would not be far-fetched to assume that some of them may have had recourse to their musical skills in their work. The Dengzhou College certainly gave the Shandong church some of its most successful and influential Christian leaders. One such was Jia Yuming 賈玉銘. As "one of China's best Bible expositors," he wrote some popular hymns, some of which "are in the present Chinese hymnbook" (Cliff, 1998).

Julia Mateer's music teaching and her encouragement of her students to use music in all school activities were not without tangible results. According to an eyewitness account in the *Wenhui guanzhi* 文會舘志 (Alumni History of Dengzhou College) published in 1913, over the years her students produced several hundred songs which they frequently sang on such occasions as school assembly, graduation ceremony, and speech competition (Wang and Liu, 1913: 66). Some of the songs, such as Zhou Shuxun's 周書训 *Shanghua* 賞花 (Admiring Flowers), were so well received that they found their way into popular song anthologies and remained popular as late as the 1930s and 1940s (Liu, 2006: 46).

The difficulty of evaluating Julia Mateer's personal impact on the history music teaching in China should not lead to the conclusion that missionary endeavour in China's musical education failed to exert any long-term influence. After all, it was at missionary institutions that Shen Xingong, the man commonly regarded as the "father of the school song" 學堂樂歌之父 (*xuetang yuege zhi fu*), learned the rudiments of Western music before he went to Japan in 1902 (Zhang, 1985: 79). Some of Shen's well-known songs are set to Christian hymn tunes and Sheng himself became a Christian in 1946 (Qian, 2001: 276-82). In his *Guoxue changge ji* 國學唱歌集 (Songs for National Learning) published in 1905, Li Shutong 李叔同 (1880 -1942), another prominent figure in the school-song movement, set classical poems from *Shijing* 詩经 (Book of Poetry) and his own lyrics to such hymn tunes as Sarah Hart's *Little drop of water*, William B. Bradbury's *Jesus loves me*, and tunes by Sarah F. Adams and H. A. Cesar Malan (Qian, 2001: 272-74). Zou Huamin 邹華民, composer of the song textbook, *Xiushen changge shu* 修身唱歌書 (Songs for Ethical Education) (1905), learned his compositional skills in music lessons provided in mission schools. In the 1911 Revolution, teachers and students of the missionary Wenhua College in Wuchang, Hubei province, used hymn tunes to set revolutionary songs (Zhang, 1985: 79). Xiao Youmei 萧友梅 (1884 -1940), best known

for his role in founding the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in 1927, got his first taste of Western music through a Portuguese priest in Macao (Xiao, 1990: 84).[29] Even the doyen of traditional Chinese music research, Yang Yinliu 楊蔭瀏 (1899-1984), author of the monumental *Zhongguo gudai yinyue shigao* 中國古代音樂史稿 (A Draft History of Ancient Chinese Music), was a Christian and owed his early musical training to an American missionary named Louise Strong Hammond (Yang, 1999: 39-40).

The influence of missionary schools in the history of musical education in China can perhaps best be seen in the "footprints" of their graduates in China's professional musical education. From very early on the faculty of the National Conservatory in Shanghai, the most prestigious musical institution in China, consisted of alumni of the McTyeire, a school founded by the missionary reformer Young J. Allen (1836-1907) and the American Southern Methodist Laura A. Haygood in 1892. Wang Ruixian 王瑞娴 (1900-?), for example, was one of the earliest Chinese piano teachers at the conservatory (Han, 1981: 45-46; Wang, 2001: 19). Zhou Shu'an 周淑安 (1894-1974), best known as the first female Chinese conductor (Han, 1981: 43-44; Liao, 1996: 77-81), played a key role in the development of the voice department of the conservatory (Chao, 1937: 278). Huang Zi 黄自 (1904-1938), dean of studies at the conservatory from 1930 to 1937, took piano lessons with another McTyeire graduate, Shi Fengzhu 史凤珠, while at Tsinghua [Qinghua] College in 1913 (Han, 1981: 41-42; Wang, 2001: 19). The violinist and violinmaker Tan Shuzhen 譚抒真 (1907-2002), a son of a church chorister from Shandong who for many years headed the conservatory's string and wind department, attended mission schools in his youth (Zhao, 1994: 736-37). Li Jialu 李嘉禄 (1919-1982), the famous pianist who served for thirty years as deputy chair of the piano department, also owed his musical career to his Christian connections (Zheng, 1994: 283-84).

The significance of Julia Mateer's musical work can be seen in a number of other ways. It represents a good example of the ways in which missionaries actively responded to their Chinese audiences. There is no question that "building up a church of those who can sing Western tunes as truly and as sweetly as Christians do in the West" (Bitton, 1909: 207) was the main purpose of church-sponsored music teaching. Yet the introduction and dissemination of aspects of Western music in late Qing China were not a simple process of missionary teaching and Chinese acceptance. Rather, it was a complex phenomenon that involved much mutual learning, adaptation and absorption. The musical work of Mateer reveals, to use the words of Gael Graham in the context of sports and physical education in mission schools at the turn of twentieth-century China, much of the "complex dynamic of initiative, negotiation, and accommodation between Chinese patrons and missionary educators" (1994: 26). As demonstrated above, in endeavouring to teach the Chinese to sing the praise of God more effectively, China missionaries experimented with a variety of strategies and put a great deal of thought into selecting suitable musical repertoires for the Chinese. As a result, the Western music they introduced in China was not a stable, unvarying, undifferentiated musical culture but a divided one, replete with national and

[29] Xiao's role as "the father of Chinese music education" and as a staunch proponent of Westernisation of Chinese music has been a topic much explored by both Chinese and Western scholars. For a study in English, see Liang (1994: 94-111). For a post-colonial interpretation of Xiao's legacy, see Jones (2001: 23-52).

denominational distinctions.[30]

The case of Julia Mateer raises the contentious question of nationalism and missionary education. For most of the twentieth century, Chinese politicians, scholars and educators viewed Christianity with deep suspicion, seeing it as an integral part of the Western imperialist encroachment on China, an expression of cultural imperialism (Zhu, 1904: 214; Xue, 1978; Li, 1987; Gu, 1991; Shen and Zhu, 1998). In keeping with this view, some music historians and musicologists in China also tended to believe that mission schools were a fertile nursing ground for "cultural annihilation" (*wenhua xuwu zhuyi* 文化虚无主义). Graduates of the mission schools, they claim, had a deep-rooted contempt for their native tradition and an unhealthy admiration for things Western as a result of their religious indoctrinations (Zhang, 1985: 79; Tan, 1994: 69; Wu, 1996: 312-44). But Mateer's stress on Chinese music in her teaching casts doubts about the validity of this view. As a number of Western scholars have pointed out, the efforts made by missionary institutions to foster a new generation of reformers in the last decades of the Qing dynasty helped produce the spirit of nationalism (Latourette, 1967: 532-33; Fairbank, 1974: 3). In the case of the Dengzhou College, "national consciousness," writes Irwin Hyatt, "was further strengthened by Calvin Mateer's stress on Mandarin use and … by Julia's musical work" (Hyatt, 1976: 189). Given that the missionaries were the first to fuse elements of Western music with indigenous folk tunes and instrumental melodies, it could even be argued that in terms of utilising "national form" (*minzu xingshi* 民族形式) to serve utilitarian purposes, an often hotly debated issue in the arts in China,[31] the China missionaries in the nineteenth century, as evidenced by the work of Julia Mateer and Timothy and Mary Richard, not Communist propagandists in the 1930s and 1940s, were the pioneers.

There is no question that Christian utilitarianism was the reason for the missionary involvement in the introduction of Western-style music teaching in China. Nor was there any doubt that Julia Mateer's musical pedagogy was yoked to the demands of the Christianising project. But to dismiss her work as mere manifestations of Western cultural imperialism is an oversimplification. David Sheng, in his pioneering study of indigenous elements in Chinese Christian hymnody, demonstrated the importance that Christian hymns had on inculcating patriotism among Chinese Christians from very early on (1964: 94, 125-28). In a recent study, Ryan Dunch has also shown that Chinese Protestants in the early years of the Republic played a key role in using flags, patriotic hymns and other symbols of the nation to awaken national consciousness among Fuzhou Protestants (2001: Chap 4). Far from depriving students of their cultural inheritance and identity, Calvin and Julia Mateer actively encouraged them to seek nourishment in their indigenous tradition. Rather than being antithetical to the awakening of a Chinese consciousness, Julia Mateer's efforts to get her students involved in gathering Chinese songs served to affirm a Chinese cultural identity in her students. As a result, in the late 1890s when China's survival became the most vexing issue of the nation, the "[Dengzhou] college increasingly encouraged students to think about their country and 'her real position' and to develop 'managerial talents for the

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30 For a more detailed study of this theme, see Gong (2006: Chapters 3 and 4).

31 In addition to numerous studies done in China, the Chinese communists' use of "national form" has been explored by a number of Western scholars. See Judd (1983); Holm (1991); Hung (1996, 2005); Gong (2008b).

nation's future position of independence'" (Hyatt, 1976: 189). The patriotic songs written by students of the Dengzhou School certainly serve as a good example of their patriotic zeal (Liu, 2006: 45-49). One such song, composed by Feng Zhiqian 馮志謙 in 1908, was so full of nationalist ardour that it advocates such ultra nationalistic goals as "shaking the Western [nations'] heavens and turning their world into an endless bloody sea" (cited in Hyatt, 1976: 190). In the 1911 Revolution, Wang Yicheng 王以成, another student of the Mateers's, died in battle fighting for the nationalist cause (Hyatt, 1976: 190).[32]

The case of Julia Mateer also shows the importance of focusing on the many dialogues, experiments and negotiations that occurred in the process of musical transmission and the importance of understanding the dynamics of arts and practical utility. It is generally true that, similar to what happened in the United States in the early days of colonization, music in mission schools and mission stations from the very beginning was conditioned by a deliberate desire on the part of missionaries to suppress indigenous music and to substitute something "better" in its place.[33] The introduction of a new pedagogy often requires the repudiation of past practices. But the extensive appropriation of Chinese musical materials in the work of the Mateers marks a deviation from this pattern. Rather than painting a picture of missionaries imposing their values and practices on their native recipients, Mateer's music primer provides a clear illustration of musical synthesis and cross-cultural fertilisation. The fact that the Mateers acted not only as agents of Western musical culture but also as learners and propagators of Chinese music complicates the usual understanding of the power relations. In a way, their case reveals as much about the teaching of Western music to the Chinese as about how the missionaries responded to the Chinese. More significantly their experiments in combining foreign forms with indigenous traditions became the opening step in a negotiation between traditional and Western elements that continues to this day.

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[33] For a brief account of the beginning of music education in the United States, see Britton (1958).

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